It becomes more apparent that with each passing year, the Arab-Israeli conflict gets a new facelift in the media headlines. Many notable news sources demonize Israel in the most “objective” manner possible, concentrating always on angles irrelevant to the real conflict. When foreign journalists come to Israel with their notebooks, pens, and preconceived notions, there is very little chance that their audience back home will have the opportunity to understand the conflict in an unbiased way. An overabundance of misinformation places Israel and her citizens into a very vulnerable position.

On the day that the settlement freeze expired, CNN featured the following headline in big bold lettering on its news site: “Palestinians: We fear Violent Israeli Settlers.” The article focused on one Palestinian family, using them as the only example to support the story’s sensational title.  What the article did not point out was that that for many Palestinians, settlement construction is a major part of their livelihood and that many are currently out of work due to the freeze. Even more sadly, stories highlighting friendly relations that do exist between Israeli settlers and Palestinians rarely appear in Western media.  [The first West Bank team in Israel’s amateur American football league](http://www.star-telegram.com/2010/09/17/2475109/israelis-palestinians-unite-on.html), which includes Israeli settlers and Palestinians, has largely been ignored by most mainstream news outlets, including CNN.

This sort of misrepresentation of the conflict is further strengthened with such articles, as “[Why Israel Doesn’t Care About Peace](http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2015602,00.html),” published in Times on September 2. The author, Karl Vicks, writes that “the truth is that Israelis are no longer preoccupied [with peace],” rather, they are busy “making money and enjoying the rays of late summer.” Photos of Israelis smoking hookah on the Ashdod beach appear alongside the article. Vicks bases his argument primarily on two Israeli real-estate agents, Eli and Heli from Ashdod, whose viewpoints he uses to represent the opinions of close to six million other Israeli Jews.

But media networks aren’t the only ones assigning wrongful and misdirected blame as to who is at fault for Mideast tensions; government officials are also echoing their sentiments. Former US President Bill Clinton recently seized the opportunity to also assign blame to Israelis, but to a more specific sector– the Russian immigrant population in Israel.  Clinton recently told US press that Israeli Russians “are the hardest-core people against the division of the land,” and “present a staggering problem” to peace.

In truth, the staggering problems facing the Middle East peace process have nothing to do with Israeli Russians, nor with the settler community.

The obstacles have all to do with the rising nuclear power of Iran and the republic’s fervent financial and military support of terrorist organizations in Gaza and Lebanon as well as in other areas across the world.

Without the financial support of Iran, Hamas’s network could not exist and would not be able to keep Gaza under its hold. With a $540 million budget for 2010, of which Iran provides the largest share, Hamas’s connection with Ahmadinejad’s government is rooted not only in money but in guns as well.

On a military level, Iran provides Hamas fighters with top military training andinstruction from the commanders of Iran’s Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The Islamic Republic also engages in delivering weapons in single components to the Sinai, paying the Sinai Bedouins for transferring the weapons through the Gaza tunnels.

The results of the Iran-Hamas connection were revealed this past summer when Egyptian police took control of nine weapons caches across hideouts the Sinai Peninsula. The weapons caches, which were hidden in Rafah city and the port city, Al-Arish, were about to be smuggled into the Gaza Strip.

Nearly 200 anti-aircraft missiles, 90 artillery shells, 200 bullets of varying sizes and anti-tank landmines, machine guns and ammunitions were among the weapons found according to the Palestinian Ma’an news agency. Egyptian security also seized 100 kilograms of TNT explosives from a hideout in a Rafah cemetery as well as 500 smuggling tunnels. The large number of missiles indicates that Palestinian terror groups in Gaza may possess a higher number of projectiles than originally assumed.

[Both Iran and Syria continue to be the chief sources for weapons bound for the Gaza Strip](http://www.haaretz.com/print-edition/news/police-in-sinai-seize-nearly-200-missiles-ammunition-destined-for-gaza-strip-1.310744), as Hamas builds a stockpile of rockets targeting close to one million Israelis in range.

But readers of the Newsweek article (June 1), “[Gaza is about Butter, Not Guns,”](http://www.newsweek.com/2010/06/07/gaza-is-about-butter-not-guns.html)by Dan Ephron, would have gained a completely different understanding of this situation. Ephron highlights, what is in his view, are the economic benefits that Israel elicits from the blockade, while completely downplaying any security threats that Gaza terror groups pose to Israelis.

And the threats are very real. This past September alone, the number of Gaza rocket attacks on southern Israel sharply increased, with close to 20 Qassams and mortar rockets fired at residential areas in the western Negev and Ashkelon.[One rocket struck between two day-care centers in on a southern Israeli kibbutz in the morning](http://sderotmedia.org.il/bin/content.cgi?ID=716&q=3) on September 12, right before children were scheduled to arrive. No one was injured although one nursery sustained damages.

As articles blaming Israel for failed Mideast peace continue to stream into the headlines, it is clear that the Mideast reality will continue just as it always has– with Iran as an increasing mobilizing force. With statements like that of Ahmed Jaabari, the leader of Hamas’ military wing, who threatened a wave of violence intended to derail the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian peace talks just two weeks ago, Israelis have no choice but to prepare themselves for war. For Israel, terror and war are always a few steps behind peace, whether mainstream media chooses to document this angle or not.